

20 February 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Frederick T. Merrill
Director, East West Contacts Staff
Department of State

SUBJECT: Proposed Librarians' Exchanges

At a previous meeting the USIB Committee on Exchanges learned that serious consideration is being given to at least two exchanges involving US-USSR librarians. One of these would be sponsored by the American Library Association and the other would involve three national libraries. Mr. Foster Mohrhardt, Librarian, Department of Agriculture, seems to be the focal point for the latter group. After reviewing the possibilities and the previous experience of librarians who have visited the USSR, the Committee believes that either or both of these exchanges would be to the net benefit of the US. They undoubtedly would develop information concerning Soviet library methods, the extent and nature of their handling, and could result in further useful procurement activities. From an intelligence viewpoint, we believe that it is worthwhile to encourage both groups in their efforts to organize reciprocal exchanges or unilateral visits to the USSR. The Committee will be pleased to furnish suggestions for itineraries or any other information you should desire concerning these exchange possibilities.

GUY E. CONLIDEN, JR.
Secretary
USIB Committee on Exchanges

Mr. Tidwell (1)
Mr. Gatewood (3)

GEC:wh